

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 20 (canceled).

Claim 21 (new). A handheld blender comprising:

- an electric motor;
- a motor housing having a handle portion;
- a manually actuatable switch on said housing for selectively operating said electric motor;
- a first shaft coupling on a drive shaft extending from said motor housing adapted to be selectively rotationally driven by said electric motor;
- a driven shaft housing having a single, unitary tube-shaped body having a hollow interior section and being selectively attachable to and detachable from said motor housing;
- a driven shaft rotatably mounted in said driven shaft housing and having a second shaft coupling at a first end of said driven shaft that is selectively engageable with said first shaft coupling, and said driven shaft having a blending tool attached to a second end of said driven shaft;
- a first shaft bearing and sealing assembly mounted directly in said driven shaft housing at a first end of said driven shaft housing for rotatably mounting said driven shaft with respect to said driven shaft housing and for hermetically sealing said hollow interior section with respect to the surrounding environment;
- and
- a second shaft bearing and sealing assembly mounted directly in said driven shaft housing at a second end of said driven shaft housing for rotatably mounting said driven shaft with respect to said driven shaft housing and for hermetically sealing said hollow interior section with respect to the surrounding environment.

Claim 22 (new). A blender according to claim 21, further comprising

an elongated handle at said handle portion; and
a knob on said motor housing at a location remote from said handle, said knob being adapted to be grasped by a user's first hand while said handle is grasped by a user's second hand.

Claim 23 (new). A blender according to claim 21, wherein
said tool is a blending blade.

Claim 24 (new). A blender according to claim 22, wherein
said handle has a longitudinal axis that is not parallel to a longitudinal axis of said driven shaft.

Claim 25 (new). A blender according to claim 24, wherein
said knob extends from said motor housing in a direction generally perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said driven shaft.